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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY REPORT

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Activities of Lucretiu Patrascam, Former Communist Minister of Justice

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In view of reports that the Rumanian Communist regime plans to stage a propaganda trial involving Lucretiu Patrascam, former Communist Minister of Justice, the following interpretation of Patrascam's activities during the period 1945-1947 may be of interest. [redacted]

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1. Lucretiu Patrascam seems to have joined the Communist Party in 1920 immediately after the First War when he finished his secondary school. [redacted] the arrest of his father, Professor Patrascam as a German collaborator (editor of Lumina) linked up with the fear of the Rumanian Government of Bolshevism, which was developing among the Russian armies in Rumania, made Patrascam in his revolt join the C.P.A. Reliable eye-witness remembers Patrascam saying in 1919-1920; "I will become a Bolshevik to revenge my father". Between the two wars, Patrascam progressed in the Party on the line of the intellectual-theoretician and not as a tactician. He had more connections with minority groups (Hungarians, Jews, Germans), which usually brought in votes for the Party, than with the working class. Probably this purely characteristic line, theoretician and lack of inclination toward tactics made him not worthwhile for training at Moscow. It should be mentioned that he is one of the best Marxist theoreticians in Rumania (alongside Radacanu, and far more advanced than the remainder of the Communists).

2. The war developed Patrascam as the political key-figure in the Communist Party. In the absence of the other Communist political leaders, he bears the political responsibility of the Rumanian Communist Party. We should remember that Antonescu carried out a double policy: he was dealing with as well as protecting the "opposition". In agreement with Moscow, Patrascam represented the Communist Party. (A large part of the contacts between him and the other opposition parties were established by Constantin Titel Petrescu). For this reason, although he had his "forced residence" at Poiana Tapului, he used to leave it often, and many times when the Gestapo was locating his place of "hiding" in Bucharest, the Rumanian political police would warn him twenty-four hours in advance to leave that place. Contacts with Antonescu's Fascist Government might be one of the accusations brought up in a trial.

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3. Were the Moscow Rumanian Communists preparing from the very beginning a "liquidation" of Patrăscu, who saw its political and moral authority developed to the maximum due to the events which happened during the war? Although impossible to state it firmly, there was an action of "counter-balancing" Patrăscu almost from the beginning. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, a Communist leader lacking the personality and independence of Patrăscu or his theoretical preparation, but of working class and Rumanian origin was "pumped up".
4. What is the first disappointment of Patrăscu towards the Soviet Union? Patrăscu was a member of the Rumanian delegation flown to Moscow to sign the Armistice. Instead of being received like a "comrade" he was received in a humiliating way, as the "delegate" of a nation conquered by Russia. From this he developed a revulsion for the "Soviet Government and authorities", but it appeared that he still maintained confidence in the "Bolshevik Party". This appeared obvious from remarks he made to Constantin Titel Petrescu after his return from Moscow.
5. What were the first frictions between Patrăscu and the Central Committee of the Rumanian Communist Party, in reality with the Moscow trained Communists? An irritation existed from the beginning, but it is difficult to determine when such irritation was transformed into incidents. Patrăscu from the beginning held four political posts: He was a member of the Political Bureau, the Central Committee, the three-men Editorial Committee of Scânteia and Minister of Justice. It seems the first incidents occurred in the Ministry of Justice, where Patrăscu was surrounded by militant, old-line Communists, jurists-counsellors, who were intellectuals and not Moscow trained. It is interesting to note that many were elements of Transylvanian minorities (where Patrăscu stood for a seat in Parliament in 1932). The "Patrăscu Group" was taking shape. It happened very often that nuclei of the "Moscow Communists" arranged the appointment of magistrates without asking him, and presented him only with the documents to be signed. This increased the irritation.
6. The first incident occurred between Patrăscu and Vasile Luca. Luca comes from Transylvania. He lacked any mass support and tried to create "cadres" for himself. Many of his supporters were recruited from ex-members of the fascist terrorist Hungarian group "Nyas". The Nyas group not only massacred Jews but committed incredible cruelties toward Rumanians. They went so far that Antonescu asked for a commission of inquiry, presided over by Germans and including Rumanian and Hungarian representatives. (One of the Rumanian delegates to this commission, Dan Geblescu, is in Paris as a refugee.) The Commission established that excesses were committed (they found Rumanians used for ploughing instead of animals and the like). When Luca, after recruiting support among ex-Nyas men, appointed them to various posts, this brought a flow of protests from Transylvania which were principally addressed to Patrăscu as Minister of Justice. Things were even more "heated" by his advisers from Transylvania, old Communists such as Burgher, et cetera, which determined Patrăscu to go to that region and examine the situation. After his investigation in Transylvania he went to Cluj, where he made his famous speech, which was interpreted by Scânteia as nationalistic and chauvinistic. This is the first time that this friction became public, through Scânteia's article. From that time the war is more or less open.
7. In 1946, Patrăscu was eliminated from the Executive Committee (Political Bureau) and the Editorial Committee of Scânteia.
8. What are Patrăscu's principal fundamental objections? Although not sure, they appear to be all connected with the fact that under the conditions which the Communist Party worked and its relationship with the Red Army, the creation of a Rumanian Communist movement which could stand on its own feet was impossible. The economic treaties with the Soviet Union and the economic exigencies of the Red Army made the lifting of the standard of living so difficult that chances for developing the Communist movement were very small. In this last point of view he was encouraged by his friend, Herbert Zilber, the best economist of the Rumanian Communist Party.

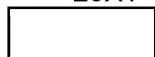
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25X1 9. It was in 1946 [redacted] that Patrascamă, rather desperate, sent a memorandum directly to Stalin without the knowledge of the Political Bureau. In this memorandum he explained that on one side the behavior of the Red Army was destroying the prospects of Romanian Communism, while on the other the fact that some of the Romanian Communist leaders transformed themselves into tools of the Russian authorities in Rumania and were looking only for opportunities to serve the Red Army was discrediting the Party in the eyes of the masses. It appeared that he took up matters of an economic nature. Apparently, a copy of this memorandum fell into the hands of Luca and Ana Pauker. The Rumanian Party had a sort of "ambassador" in Stalin's cabinet. His name was Bejan (apparently a false name; there is a slight chance that this person should be in fact a lawyer from Balti, Bessarabia, called Weissbuch). He wished to be recalled to Rumania and made a deal with Pauker and Luca that in exchange for the copy of the memorandum he would be recalled. What was Stalin's reaction? Although for tactical reasons he encouraged Patrascamă quasi-officially through two or three channels and agreed on several points, basically, [redacted] Stalin was against Patrascamă. By this means, Patrascamă brought on his own "liquidation".

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10. Patrascamă addressed Stalin as the great leader of all Communist movements above the Russian Government. He did not understand the reality, that Stalin above all is the leader of Russian imperialism and using "Communism" in order to facilitate Russian expansion.

11. How were "proofs" gathered against Patrascamă's "treason"? It is rather complicated and still unclear. Anyway, a great role was played in it against his will and in full good faith by Herbert Zilber.

25X1 12. [redacted] at about the time Patrascamă wrote the memorandum, Zilber was approached by one of the main responsible Soviet NKVD leaders, a certain Petre Goncharuk (the name is naturally not his real one) had had a large experience in Rumanian affairs. In the pre-war Comintern he had been responsible for the Rumanian Communist Party, and it appeared stayed in Rumanian prisons for a long time. He was married to a Rumanian Communist, and had one of the most important political roles in the supervision in Rumania. He led a whole ring and had his people in all the Communist organizations, including the Moscow groups.

13. Goncharuk told Zilber that Moscow fully shared Patrascamă's and Zilber's views. Communism should build itself up on its own basis, and the social revolution should come from within and not be imposed in difficult conditions and thus discredited. The main thing according to Goncharuk, was to ensure economic conditions which would guarantee amongst others a high standard of living. Russia did not wish war; the transition period would last longer than the Moscow "group" believed. Neither Zilber nor Patrascamă should not worry too much about this group. The Communist Party in order to insure a healthy economy, imports and exports machinery, needs commercial agreements with the United States and Great Britain. These countries must be made to see the Communist process as a social normal evolution in the Balkans and not as a submission to Russia as a country. Because of the long transition period and because commercial exchanges and supplies should be obtained from the United States and Great Britain, in order to build up an industry, contacts were still necessary with the bourgeoisie. The undeniable fact is that Goncharuk established his headquarters in Zilber's flat. Patrascamă, as a Rumanian, was making personal contacts with some of the opposition people. There was a rumor that he even went to see the King secretly several times. Goncharuk continued to lead this work and encourage it.

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14. In 1946, at the signing of the Peace Treaties in Paris, Zilber went with Pătrăscu. What actually happened at the signing of the Peace Treaty is difficult to state [redacted] Anyway Zilber had arranged different contacts [redacted] with western elements with the agreement and advice of Goncharuk's agents, one Nihail Simion, member of the SSI but a secret member of Goncharuk's ring had the mission to supervise Pătrăscu and Zilber and report to Goncharuk. This was simple since Goncharuk, already knowing Zilber's projects, facilitated Nihail Simion's job. It seems a lot of "compromising" materials were gathered at the Paris Conference. It appears that a provocation has been "arranged" so that Zilber, who was an adviser of the oil sub-commission, was accused of indiscretions. In autumn 1947 the game was approaching its end, and Zilber was eliminated from the Party in public and from the Administrative Council of C.E.C. where he represented the Communist Party. In fact, while Zilber was purged publicly, Goncharuk had his headquarters in Zilber's house and was on very friendly terms with him. Zilber was still very reassured. Soon thereafter, about October 1947, Zilber disappeared. There are many rumors; the most persistent is that Zilber committed suicide. Maybe Goncharuk shot Zilber because he was the only witness which might have stated that he was behind all those "contacts" with imperialists. Perhaps he was taken to Russia as one of the best specialists in Rumanian economy. Perhaps he was taken to Russia because if he agrees to appear in the Pătrăscu process and tell the "truth" as a witness, but forgot to mention the role played by Goncharuk and the NKVD, he might be useful.

15. Once Zilber was "liquidated" Pătrăscu soon followed. At the end of 1947 and early 1948, Pătrăscu who attacked publicly by Teohari Georgescu, Minister of the Interior. It was then rumored that he was at Snagov in forced domicile. Others reported having seen him later at a library where he was reading books and gathering material for a book.

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25X1 17. It appears that some (two it seems) diplomatic couriers [redacted] maintained contacts on behalf of Pătrăscu [redacted] They were arrested, and it appears they made full statements. [redacted] [redacted] if such couriers existed (and they did) they were "provocators" from the very beginning. Exception might be made with a friend of Pătrăscu [redacted] and was recalled and arrested in Bucharest.

25X1 17. [redacted] a certain Andrescu, a former member of the Rumanian Legations [redacted] who was a friend of Pătrăscu and was later recalled to Bucharest (1949), is also involved in this affair. Although recalled by Ana Pauker and deserting the Legation for one month, he was still reappointed at the Rumanian diplomatic service. [redacted] it was a result of a direct Soviet intervention, because they are so strong that they might have protected a diplomat against Ana Pauker.

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